

United States Government

Department of Energy
Bonneville Power Administration

memorandum

DATE: May 28, 1999

REPLY TO
ATTN OF: KECN-4

SUBJECT: Supplemental Analysis for the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS, (DOE/EIS-0246/SA-05)

to: Allyn Meuleman – KEWN/Boise
Fish and Wildlife Project Manager

Proposed Action: Boundary Creek Acquisition, Project No. 9206100

Budget No: F3298

Wildlife Management Techniques of Actions Addressed Under this Supplement Analysis (See Appendix A of the Wildlife Mitigation Program EIS):

1.0 Resource Acquisition Techniques (Fee-title acquisition, easement acquisition), 2.0 Plant Propagation Techniques (transplanting vegetation, seeding, fertilization), 3.0 Habitat Creation and Conversion (creating wetlands, artificial islands, artificial nest structures), 4.0 Water Development and Management Techniques (diversions, check dams/impoundments), 5.0 Water Distribution Techniques (pipelines, culverts, drainage ditches/conveyance channels), 6.0 Fire Management Techniques (prompt fire suppression and fuels management, natural fire management), 7.0 Vegetation Management: Enhancement and Control (herbicides, mechanical removal, biological control, hand pulling, prescribed burn), 8.0 Species Management Techniques (control of predators and nuisance animals), 9.0 Multiple Use Techniques (provision of educational and recreational opportunities, facility development), 10.0 Transportation/Access Techniques (land use restrictions, road maintenance).

Location: Boundary County, Idaho

Proposed by: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and Idaho Department of Fish and Game.

Description of the Proposed Action: BPA and the Idaho Department of Fish and Game are proposing to purchase 1,425 acres along the Kootenai River located at Township 65 North, Range 2 West, Sections 11, 12, 13, and 14 and Township 65 North, Range 1 West, Section 7 in Boundary County, Idaho. The Natural Resources Conservation Service owns a permanent conservation easement on 1,236 acres. BPA and IDFG funds will be used to purchase the easement and the remaining 189 acres. This parcel, referred to as the Boundary Creek property, will be managed to re-establish historic wetland basins.

The Kootenai Valley was a large flat floodplain, linking higher gradient upstream reaches of the Kootenai River to Kootenay Lake located downstream. Large annual floods from an extensive mountainous watershed and River channel movement through time created a complex of temporary, seasonal, semi-permanent, and permanent wetlands covering roughly 15,000 acres in Idaho. The Boundary Creek parcel included 14 distinct wetland basins with emergent marsh and scrub/shrub/cottonwood habitat that were converted to farmland by 1950.

Potential wildlife habitat includes up to 1,000 acres of restorable wetlands and intermixed uplands. Active bald eagle nesting territory and deer and elk winter and calving range are present. This area is also regularly used by grizzly bear (including sow with cubs).

Analysis: The compliance checklist for this project was completed by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and meets the standards and guidelines for the Wildlife Mitigation Program Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Record of Decision.

Section 7 consultation was initiated in early 1999 with a verbal request for a species list by the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). A response letter from the USFWS with a species list is attached. Frank Fink of the NRCS intends to prepare a Biological Assessment for this project in August or September 1999 after more details of the restoration plan are known (personal communication, 5/24/99, Frank Fink, NRCS). It is the intent of the NRCS to meet the requirements of the Endangered Species Act before any ground disturbing activities take place.

Alan Spencer of the NRCS conducted a cultural resources survey of the property in May 1999. A trip report is attached. No prehistoric resources were observed. The inventory did reveal 3 historic sites, two of which will be recommended eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The third site is not eligible by itself for the NRHP but would be considered contributing elements if this property was nominated as a historic district. The project will have no effect on these important cultural resources and Mr. Spencer recommends that the project should proceed. Mr. Spencer also includes several cultural resources management recommendations that should be followed by Idaho Department of Fish and Game. To be consistent with the Record of Decision for the Wildlife Mitigation Program, Idaho Department of Fish and Game will prepare a cultural resource management plan approved by the State Historic Preservation Office. A final report will be completed in about two weeks (see attached trip report) and forwarded to the State Historic Preservation Officer. The final report will be included in the project file when received.

On May 18, 1999, Maxim Technologies conducted a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) of the property. The objective of the ESA-TSP is to identify "recognized environmental conditions" in general accordance with the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Standard E1527-97. Maxim identified the use of a 10,000-gallon diesel storage tank and treatment tanks that preserved fence posts. These items had been removed on May 8, 1999 and soil samples taken and tested. Results show that minor overfill contamination of less than 2 cubic yards around the fill area of the 10,000 gallon diesel tank was the only petroleum contamination identified on site. The contaminated soils were segregated and mixed with native soils and spread on the surface of the backfilled excavation to naturally attenuate.

Other above-ground storage tanks in use did not show any soil staining. Should these be removed in the future, soil samples should be collected below the fill and dispensing portions of the tanks to ensure soils have not been impacted by petroleum products.

Various weed control chemicals and petroleum products were present in buildings at the site. Chemicals properly stored and labeled may be utilized, sold or properly disposed of by the current owner of the site prior to site acceptance by Idaho Department of Fish and Game. Any unknown chemicals or unlabelled containers should be tested to ensure proper disposal.

Findings: The project is generally consistent with Section 11.2D.1 of the Norwest Power Planning Council's Fish and Wildlife Program. The attached Supplement Analysis finds 1) that the proposed actions are substantially consistent with the Wildlife Management Program EIS (DOE/EIS-2965) and ROD, and; 2) that there are no new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns and bearing on the proposed actions or their impacts. Therefore, no further NEPA documentation is required.

Nancy A. Wittpenn
KECN Project Lead
Environment, Fish and Wildlife Group

CONCUR: _____ DATE: _____
Thomas C. McKinney
NEPA Compliance Officer

Attachments:
NEPA Compliance Checklist
Letter from USFWS to Mike Gondek, NRCS
Cultural Resources Trip Report
Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment
Tier 0 Risk Based Corrective Action, UST Site Closure Reporting

cc: w/ attachments
Stacey H. Stovall, Idaho Dept. of Fish and Game